

ABSTRACT

A system whereby a short-range base station (pico-station) controls mobile communications within a limited area, such as a theater or airport, where the use of mobile phones or other communications devices is annoying or hazardous. The pico-station determines if mobile communications devices under its control are equipped to operate in a silent-communications mode. Within the limited area, calls to and from the communications devices are either blocked or restricted to silent operation, depending on the capabilities of the communications device.